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**Permanent Commission on the Status of Women**

*The State's leading force for women's equality*

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**Testimony of  
The Permanent Commission on the Status of Women  
Before the  
Judiciary Committee  
March 30, 2011**

**Re: S.B. 1220, AAC Family Violence  
H.B. 6629, AAC Domestic Violence  
H.B. 6633, AAC Stalking**

Senators Coleman and Kissel, Representative Fox and Hetherington, and members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Permanent Commission on the Status of Women (PCSW) in response to the introduction of the above referenced bills.

**S.B. 1220, AAC Family Violence  
H.B. 6629, AAC Domestic Violence**

H.B. 1220 would establish a uniform protocol for investigation family violence cases, provide training to judges and prosecutors, and allocate criminal fines in family violence cases to programs that benefit victims of family violence. H.B. 6629 would assist victims of domestic violence in several ways, including: 1) expanding protections to those who have experienced a pattern of verbal intimidation, threatening or stalking; 2) allowing persons with a protective order to keep personal identifying information confidential; and 3) establishing more domestic violence dockets.

Domestic violence is an on-going problem – we cannot predict when or where it will occur. It is also a problem that disproportionately affects women. Of those victimized by an intimate partner, 85% are women and 15% are men. In other words, women are 5 to 8 times more likely than men to be victimized by an intimate partner.<sup>1</sup> PCSW applauds efforts aimed at supporting and protecting victims of domestic violence.

**H.B. 6633, AAC Stalking**

<sup>1</sup> Lawrence A. Greenfeld et al. (1998). Violence by Intimates: Analysis of Data on Crimes by Current or Former Spouses, Boyfriends, and Girlfriends. Bureau of Justice Statistics Factbook. Washington DC: U.S. Department of Justice. NCJ # 167237.

H.B. 6633 would expand protection from stalking and increase the penalties for stalking. Just like domestic violence, stalking disproportionately affects women. In fact, one out of every 12 women will be stalked in her lifetime.<sup>2</sup> Young women ages 18-24 experience stalking at higher rates than any other group and in most cases, victims of stalking are stalked by someone they know.

The impact of stalking on victims is significant. The prevalence of anxiety, insomnia, social dysfunction, and severe depression is much higher among stalking victims than the general population, especially if the stalking involves being followed or having one's property destroyed. Additionally, 1 in 8 employed stalking victims lose time from work as a result of their victimization and more than half lose 5 days of work or more. In some cases stalking victims move as a result of their victimization (1 in 7).<sup>3</sup>

#### *Stalking Statistics<sup>4</sup>*

- 11% of stalking victims have been stalked for 5 years or more.
- 46% of stalking victims experience at least one unwanted contact per week.
- 1 in 4 victims report being stalked through the use of some form of technology (such as e-mail or instant messaging).
- 10% of victims report being monitored with global positioning systems (GPS), and 8% report being monitored through video or digital cameras, or listening devices.
- Two-thirds of stalkers pursue their victims at least once per week, many daily, using more than one method.
- 78% of stalkers use more than one means of approach.
- Weapons are used to harm or threaten victims in 1 out of 5 cases.
- Almost 1/3 of stalkers have stalked before.
- Intimate partner stalkers frequently approach their targets, and their behaviors escalate quickly.

We look forward to working with you to address these important issues. Thank you for your consideration.

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<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Justice, Research Brief, Stalking in America

<sup>3</sup> The National Center for Victims of Crime, Stalking Resource Center, Fact Sheet on Stalking, 2009

<sup>4</sup> The National Center for Victims of Crime, Stalking Resource Center, Fact Sheet on Stalking, 2009